

Disease Management

All of us are aware of the high cost of health care. It seems that every week, the newspaper or television has a story on the cost of health care. Just like any other employer, state government is challenged to provide quality health care at an affordable price.



A **disease management program** (sometime referred to as **whole health dimensions**) is a way of providing quality health care while trying to decrease cost.

What is a disease management program?

A disease management program provides individualized care plans for you or your family members with treatable chronic diseases to improve health outcomes. The program provides personalized contact with a nurse, educational materials, and other services to educate individuals while supporting the physician's plan of care.

A disease management program is offered to State of Iowa employees and retirees enrolled in a Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield health plan. The disease management program is provided by American Healthways, recognized as a premier disease management provider. Union leadership was involved in the implementation of the disease management program and supports the disease management program as a means to improving employee health and controlling cost.

The program administered by American Healthways:

- Helps you understand your disease or condition.
- Offers emotional support.
- Provides personalized phone contact with nurses.
- Supports your physician's recommendations.
- Helps you recognize early changes in your conditions that require medical attention.
- Addresses additional conditions you may have.
- Supports the relationship between you and your physician.
- Teaches appropriate health care utilization.
- Encourages you to make behavior changes that will enhance your quality of life.

What diseases are covered under the program?

The following diseases have always been covered under the disease management program:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Cardiac
 - Congestive Heart Failure
 - Coronary Artery Disease

In 2008, the following eleven conditions were added to Program 3 Plus, Deductible 3 Plus and Iowa Select. Blue Access and Blue Advantage already included these conditions in the disease management program:

- Acid Related Stomach Disorder
- Atrial Fibrillation
- Decubitus Ulcers
- Fibromyalgia
- Hepatitis C
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Low Back Pain
- Osteoarthritis
- Osteoporosis
- Urinary Incontinence

How do I participate in the disease management program?

If you have one of the diseases listed above, you may be contacted and invited to participate in the disease management program.

Is participation in the disease management program voluntary?

Yes, participation in the disease management program is voluntary.

Are there additional costs to participate in the disease management program?

There are no additional costs to participate in the disease management program. The program is financed through the insurance premiums.

What services do I receive by participating in a disease management program?

Participants in the disease management program receive:

- Introductory letter and welcome call.
- Welcome packet that includes disease-specific information.
- “Care calls” by nurses that provide individual support.
- Self-care goal reminders.
- Nurses available toll-free 24/7.
- Mailed reminders about important screening tests and standards of care.
- Online health risk assessment tool.
- Depression screening and Quality of Life/Health Perception Survey.
- Quarterly disease-specific newsletter.
- Regular communication with providers.
- Educational materials provided on an as needed basis.

Can I cancel participation in the disease management program?

Participation in the disease management program can be cancelled at any time.

Can my eligible family members participate in the disease management program?

Family members are eligible to participate in the disease management program.

Is the information I provide American Healthways confidential?

Any health information you provide to American Healthways is treated as confidential. The State of Iowa, Wellmark and American Healthways are committed to protecting the privacy of your health information. Your health information will only be requested, used or disclosed as permitted or required by law.

Does the disease management program replace my physician’s role?

No. The disease management program was developed to enhance the physician/patient relationship and reinforce the physician’s plan of care. The program is meant to provide you with personalized nurse contact, educational materials, and other support services.

Who can contact if I want more information on the disease management program?

Contact Wellmark’s customer service for more information on the disease management program. The customer service numbers are:

Blue Access	1-800-553-7801
Blue Advantage	1-800-553-7801
Deductible 3 Plus	1-800-622-0043
Iowa Select PPO	1-800-622-0043
Program 3 Plus	1-800-622-0043